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Thursday, January 10, 2013

THE BINGIEWS

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Venezuela top court upholds delay of Chavez swearing-in



CARACAS (AFP) - Venezuela's Supreme Court Wednesday said ailing President Hugo Chavez could indefinitely postpone his swearing-in to a new term and that his current administration could continue to govern in the meantime.

A panel of seven magistrates unanimously upheld the constitutionality of the delay amid a national debate over whether the cancerstricken Chavez had to at least temporarily hand over power if he was unable to take the oath of office on

Thursday, when his new term is to begin.

"The oath-taking of the re-elected president can be carried out at a time after January 10 before the Supreme Court, if it is not done on the said day before the National Assembly," the ruling said.

In the meantime, the officials of the current administration "will continue fully exercising their functions under the principle of administrative continuity," it said.

Supreme Court president Luisa Estella Morales, who read out the decision, also ruled out convening a medical board to assess the health of the president, who was in Cuba recovering from a fourth round of cancer surgery.

"At no time has the Supreme Court considered that there were merits to convening a medical board at this time," she said.

Chavez, 58, will have

Chavez, 58, will have been absent from the country for a month on Thursday, out of view for the longest stretch of his 14 years in office, raising great uncertainties about his condition.

A call for volunteers for Friends of the Handicapped



Surviving FOTH volunteers and their memorial plaque

Twenty-six years ago, a group of island visitors who considered Aruba "the next best thing to Heaven" and their "home away from home" banded together to form a foundation to give back to the island that made them feel so welcome. Keith Jones and his wife Wilma, both now deceased, founded Friends of the Handicapped, (FOTH) which began their fundraising efforts by conducting a Superbowl lottery and raffle to raise money for local island charities.

Since then a stream of volunteers have worked tirelessly during their few months on Aruba organizing fun events for both visitors and islanders alike, which have raised over 1.25 million dollars for island foundations that perform vital services. Each year, before departure. FOTH distributes tens of thousands of florins to important organizations assisting the mentally and physically challenged, terminal cancer patients, the elderly, and other fine services such as Meals on Wheels, and halfway houses for addicts.

On the wall of Cas Del Mar Resort is a plaque commemorating the "Fallen Soldiers" of the Friends of the Handicapped who are no longer with us. Fourteen names are mounted there. The remaining volunteers consist of President Art Stark, Phil Solomon, Sal and Maryann Lacarruba, David Ulmschneider and Huguette Vatiquette. Through the years they have been ably assisted by Marcelino Kock and Anoushka Maduro of the Casa Del Mar staff.

Unfortunately, this year, the volunteers sadly admit that none of them are as young or healthy as they used to be, and the years are taking their toll. They have already decided to forgo their premier fundraising effort, the Superbowl Lottery, but hope to still put on their annual Sweetheart's Valentine's Day Din-

ner Dance, which has become a tradition for many as the only way to celebrate the holiday with their special someone. For a decade it has done very well in attendance coupled with the special raffle of great prizes provided by local companies in raising major funds. Five years ago they began a very popular Bingo Night, with many of the cash prizes personally donated by FOTH members.

Last year alone, FOTH raised over 45,000 Arubian florins (\$25,700) which were donated to thirteen local foundations, and have actually collected much more in years past.

Continued on pg 5





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MVC Sales & Marketing Team Aruba celebrates its winning ways











A gala celebration and awards ceremony, recently held beachside at Renaissance Island, proved a momentous occasion with a record number of associates from Marriott Vacation Club's (MVC) Sales & Marketing team achieving top honors. Loud applause erupted after each winner

was announced in the different categories in which Marriott Vacation Club associates excelled in their goals. But it was the announcement of the ultimate honor of the J. Willard Marriott Award of Excellence which brought down the house as Senior Marketing Manager Ligenne Trimon was recognized for

extraordinary contributions exceeded sales targets. to an already highly success- Within Marketing, assoful Sales & Marketing team. ciates who earned Sap-

Aruba's Sales & Marke- phire ting team is consistently included Nabhilach de among the highest rated in Palm, Eric Andrews, the region among Marriott Christal Ross, Vacation Club properties. Pombo, Edwina Gario, This fact was borne out once Camille Simms-Valley, again in the sheer number of Carlos Ramos, Delrine

award winners who met and Thomas, Zuraila Wever, Giel-Violenes, Thea Maroushka Sanchez, Annie de Windt, Yria dos Santos and Reaching Chumpitazi. Simmons, Kimberley Riley, Gisela Sa and Elly Rustveld. In providing essential support, Top Performers included Edmond Adonis in Guest Relations, Charles Williams as OPC, Carlos Ramos for

recognition







Linkage, Claudia Simmons with Encore, Kimberley Riley at the Airport and Elly Rustveld for In-House efforts. Career achievements were also noted with honors going to Ben Pombo as Rookie of the Year and Elly Rustveld as Marketing Execu-Fernando tive of the Year.

Hard work, dedication and knoweven higher targets were how also translated into excellent re Super Sapphire winners sults in the Sales division with Angele Geerman, Claudia Sapphire recognition achieved by Roy Lacle, Aureliano Chopitea, Cedrick Croes, Sidney Flanegin, Gary Barnes, Ivick Rasmijn, Francis Groeneveldt, Rodney Marugg, Michel Bogevad, Caroline Cijntje-Daly, Moises Vallejo-Lopez, Tina Lampe, Astrid Tromp and Nayda Lopez.

Continued on pg 4





Garlic smuggling duo made 'millions'

STOCKHOLM (AFP) - Two British men are believed to have made millions of euros in just over a year by smuggling Chinese garlic from Norway into Sweden, a prosecutor in Gothenburg said Wednesday. Something didn't smell right for authorities in June 2010, when a truck full of garlic was intercepted in the Bohuslaen region, near the Norwegian border.

The trail led them to a garlic smuggling duo who are believed to have made millions of euros by avoiding European Union tariffs.

"You bring the garlic into Norway saying it's for your own consumption, and then you take it into Sweden," said prosecutor Thomas Ahlstrand.

Between February 2009 and June 2010, the men are believed to have skirted 10.6 million euros (\$13.8 million) in tariffs and fees by bringing garlic into the Scandinavian country from Norway, which is not a member of the EU.

Government keeps promise to protect laborers on minimum wages

The Aruba government is making every effort to bring about necessary changes in the minimum wage law so as to improve the position of those on minimum wage. This is one of the labor laws which will be deliberated in Parliament this year. The Minister of Labor is intent on ensuring that every employee has the guarantee of a specific sum of money for their advancement.

The government is of the opinion that the minimum wage must be paid out in full in cash. The current situation is such that the minimum

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wage could consist of other components. But, the Minister of Labor is convinced that the worker cannot suffer any kind of wage loss, particularly in light of the improvement of our economic situation.

An employee who works 40 hours a week during an entire month, cannot collect less than the complete minimum wage effective January 1st, 2014. The employee who works less than 40 hours per week also has the right to collect minimum wages relative to the normal stipulation. The minimum salary for a worker who works 32 hours per week is 4/5 of the minimum wage and a worker with a workweek of 36 hours will receive 90% of the minimum wage.

In actuality, an employee and the employer could reach an agreement that the minimum wage could consist of different components other than cash, such as: tips, trunk, point system, food and rent The government, however, wants to eliminate these components and make adjustment so that all systems of compensation that the employee receives for his efforts, may not be applied as part of the minimum wage. The government sees this as an incentive for the employee to function more productively because he will be earning more at the end of the day.

The primary objective of this change in the labor law

with respect to the minimum wage is to give each worker the opportunity and guarantee that they will receive the

minimum wage that is socially acceptable in order to comply with their primary daily necessities.





The Weisses and the Feldmans always choose Aruba for a special anniversary celebration



Friends Forever, The Feldmans (L) and the Weisses

Roz and Jay Weiss of Long Island, New York spent their honeymoon on Aruba in 1967, and it has been their favorite vacation destination ever since that memorable week. Eventually, they purchased timesharing at Costa Linda, during the week of their anniversary, January 12, so as to always be sure of having lovely surroundings to mark this special occasion.

One year, they were enjoying the company of their daughter Tracy while on their winter sojourn, who told her mother, "I swear, I am sure I spent a summer on a Wilderness Tour a few years ago with that girl walking by the pool deck." It turned out she was quite right, she recognized Danielle, daughter of Karen and Donald Feldman of Boston, and when confirming her suspicion, a steadfast friendship lasting nearly 20 years was formed between the parents.

To their delight, both couples discovered they had married in the same year; one in January and one in June, so it became an annual Aruban ritual for them to celebrate their wedding anniversary together. Each year, they choose a special place, and this year, it was Windows on Aruba in the Divi Links Clubhouse.

The elegant environment and menu, as well as the panoramic view were just what the Weisses and Feldmans prefer for their special night out. The restaurant responded with VIP treatment, including a champagne toast. This year, they were also celebrating a landmark birthday for Donald, who is a hearty, youthful 70 years old. These days, 70 is the new 50, right? If so, he certainly proves it!

It was an exceptionally delightful night for both couples, as they enjoyed 46 years of marriage and nearly two decades of congenial friendship.

THE MORNING NEWS is very proud they elected to share this wonderful occasion with our paper. Congratulations to the Weisses and the

Feldmans, we wish you many more years of wedded bliss and good friends.

By Rosalie Klein

Strategic plans to increase tourism for 2013

The Minister of Tourism is very pleased with the excellent increase of tourism during 2012. Despite the many challenges throughout the year, Aruba saw a sizeable increase, and the outlook for 2013 appears to be very positive.

The government is working diligently on strategic plans together with ATA, AAA and other partners so as to achieve and even surpass the goals for tourism this year.

One of the challenges of last year was the 6% drop of the Brazilian market. The reason for that drop was due to the fact that the Brazilian government is stimulating the

Brazilian community to invest in their domestic economy, and are motivating the community to do their shopping locally instead of investing in vacations.

The second factor which had an effect on the drop in the Brazilian market is the competition from certain destinations in the region; for example, Cancun, Bahamas and Santo Domingo. These all came up with attractive packages for the Brazilian market through the phenomena of the all-inclusive concept.

Aruba is not intent on joining the war on pricing going on in the region. Instead, we want to use direct flights together with our hotels to bring the Brazilian tourist to Aruba for vacations.

Non-stop flights will allow Aruba to achieve the level we want to reach the Brazilian market. We did not achieve this like we anticipated in 2012 due to logistics with respect to the Guarulhos airport, which was unable to increase their capacity of slotting, according to the Minister of Tourism.

The difference can be created by having an airline to fly directly to and from Brazil. For this reason, the Minister of Tourism is supporting airlines planning on doing this. According to the Minister, the Brazilian tourist spends more than the average tourist visiting Aruba currently. We foresee that during 2013 with our strategies in place we will see another growth in the number of visitors from Brazil.

MVC Sales & Marketing Team Aruba celebrates its winning ways Continued from pg 2

Super Sapphire status was earned by Charles DiPerri and Hendrik van Lennep. Winning qualities of associates also merited praise, with Cedrick Croes recognized as having the Best Sales Attitude, Nazih Hamawi for Best Teamwork, Ingrid Cijntje for Best CSS Score and Astrid Tromp for Highest SG Volume. Outstanding sales skills earned Edgard Sune the title of Rookie of the Year, and Charles DiPerri the title of Sales Executive of the Year.

Marriott Ocean Club and Marriott Surf Club Site Awards, earned by associates for overall performance, received special attention, with Maureen Vrolijk recognized as a nominee for the Operations Team Manager of the Year, Jacky Ammerlaan as Front Desk Star, Arlinda Marin as Associate of the Year, Doris Kelkboom as Manager of the Year and the Award of Excellence going to Ligenne Trimon.

Acknowledgement also went to the Human Resources Manager Natasia Dragt for putting together a year-end celebration that combined excellent music, superb cuisine and elegant atmosphere befitting the occasion in honoring an outstanding Aruban team.

Words of thanks to all associates were expressed by awards presenters and department heads, Director of Sales Noami Cham, Director of Marketing Theolinda Richardson, R egional Director of Sales Ron Moser and Project Director Bettina Gonzalez.

Champagne faux pas at Obama inaugural luncheon?



WASHINGTON (AFP) - Would champagne by any other name taste as good? For French producers, the answer is a resounding "non" -- especially when the beverage is to be served at the US presidential inaugural luncheon.

Champagne producers in France, who are very protective of the singular nature of their product, were not necessarily upset that California-made bubbly is to be served at lunch after President Barack Obama's January 21 swearing-in.

But the official menu from organizers -- which includes steamed lobster, hickory grilled bison, apple pie and "Korbel Natural, Special Inaugural Cuvee Champagne, California" -released Wednesday definitely raised hackles.

"Champagne only comes from Champagne," Sam Heitner, the director of the US Champagne Bureau, told AFP, referring to the French region outside Paris where the festive fizzy beverage is produced.

The name may seem a trifling matter, but Europeans are striving to protect the names of regional and traditional foods originating from specific regions, such as French champagne and Parmesan cheese made in Parma, Italy.

The United States and the European Union in 2006 signed a deal banning US producers from using the word "champagne" on their labels -- but the law was not retroactive, so producers like Korbel can still use the French term.

However, they must specify where it is made -- "California Champagne" or "New York Champagne," according to Heitner.

Later in the day, a spokesman for the inaugural organizing committee seemingly put an end to the bubbling crisis.

"The menu will say 'California Champagne'," the spokesman told AFP.

Gold Coast Aruba... A Place for You!



A call for volunteers for FOTH Continued from pg 1

However, they still contributed much more than most of these charities will see from local companies.

The continuing efforts, however, of this fine organization that has done so much for the Aruban community, is seriously in doubt. Time marches on.. For years, they have been attempting to recruit new volunteers to "pick up the baton" of their fine work, well aware that it is not getting easier for any of them.

The volunteers have already established the connections and procedures for their

events. What they need is fresh energy to contribute back to the Aruban community, and not necessarily only among island visitors. Ideally, they would be very happy to see permanent residents and members of the local community join them in "giving back." For more information how you can help or to volunteer your time: website: visit their http://ffoth.org/index.html. Call Anoushka at 582-7000 extension 600 or e-mail acrm9@hotmail.com or con-Art Stark aandastark@aol.com

Obama Labor Secretary quits

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US Labor Secretary Hilda Solis resigned on Wednesday, becoming the latest member of President Barack Obama's cabinet to decide not to stay on in his second term.

Obama praised the Hispanic former lawmaker as a "tireless champion for working families" and said she had been a critical member of his team in helping the economy recover from the worst recession since the 1930s.

"Her efforts have helped train workers for the jobs of the future, protect workers' health and safety and put millions of Americans back to work," Obama said in a statement.

Solis had been among the cabinet secretaries that had been expected to depart Obama's cabinet as he freshens his team for a second term in which a priority is lowering the still high unemployment rate of 7.8 percent.

Obama will be under pressure to find women to replace Solis and other cabinet officers who are expected to leave, after naming Chuck Hagel and John Kerry to serve as secretaries of defense and state.



AIG refuses to join lawsuit against US government

NEW YORK (AFP) - The board of AIG decided Wednesday not join a private shareholder lawsuit against the US government over the government's \$182 billion rescue of the insurer in 2008.

AIG said its board determined that a decision not to join the lawsuit led by former chief executive Maurice "Hank" Greenberg met its "fiduciary and legal obligations" to AIG and its shareholders.

The lawsuit filed by Starr International, which is controlled by Greenberg, argued that the massive bailout of AIG did not fairly compensate shareholders. Starr sued the government for \$25 billion in November 2011.

trol of AIG in September 2008 to prevent its imminent collapse from sparking a snowball of gigantic failures throughout the global financial system, but it wiped out most of the value of AIG's shares.

Starr petitioned the board to join in or take the lead in the suit, but the board rejected the request.

"The AIG Board has determined to refuse Starr's demand in its entirety, and will neither pursue these claims itself nor permit Starr to pursue them in AIG's name," the company said in a statement.

AIG said that in the coming weeks it would file with the courts a formal statement giving its "underlying" reasons for not joining the suit.

The government took conThe government took consons for not joining the suit. US National Cathedral opens doors



WASHINGTON (AFP) - The Washington National Cathedral, a focal point of Christian worship in the United States, said Wednesday that, effective immediately, it will officiate same-sex weddings.

In a statement, its dean, Gary Hall, said the cathedral -- one of the biggest in the nation -- would marry gay and lesbian couples using a rite adapted from the Episcopal church's existing blessing ceremony.

"We enthusiastically af-

firm each person as a beloved child of God, and doing so means including the full participation of gays and lesbians in the life of this spiritual home for the nation," he said.

Same-sex marriage is legal in nine US states and the District of Columbia, but banned in around 30 other states. Later this year, the US Supreme Court is to consider the federal government's refusal to recognize LGBT marriages.

President Barack Obama, who last year became the first serving president to openly support marriage equality, is to attend a national prayer service at the cathedral on January 22 as part of the inauguration of his second term

Libya PM threatens force to secure vital oil sector

TRIPOLI (AFP) - Libya's Prime Minister Ali Zeidan threatened to impose order by force on Wednesday in response to unrest that has caused astronomical losses in the oil sector and deadly violence in the capital.

"We will be compelled to use force to protect the state," Zeidan warned on the sidelines of a ministerial meeting which he interrupted to speak to the press.

"Oil is our only source of revenue," he said, lamenting the loss of 1.3 million Libyan dinars (\$1 million) per day because of inaccessible oil installations blocked off by protesters. Oil installations have be-

Oil installations have become a focal point of protests in the wake of July polls that ushered in the country's first elected authorities. In December, the strategic Zueitina oil terminal was shut down by demonstrators.

Zeidan also urged citizens to support the nascent army and police.

"We will not allow any (armed) force to confront the people and threaten national security. I warn families, tribes and regions that we will take decisive measures," the premier said.

"We cannot be patient when violence results in the disruption of oil supplies and the loss of life."

The statement comes in the wake of disparate acts of violence in the capital, including the killing of a drug dealer in the neighbourhood of Fashlum which sparked anti-police violence and demonstrations that blocked off roads.

UN envoy to hold new Russia-US talks on Syria Friday

WASHINGTON (AFP) - UN peace envoy Lakhdar Brahimi will meet with top Russian and US officials in Geneva on Friday, for fresh talks on how to end the bloody 21-month conflict in Syria.

Both Moscow and Washington confirmed Wednesday that talks would go ahead between joint UN-Arab League envoy Brahimi, as well as Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov and US Undersecretary of State William Burns.

Since the three men met for the first time in December, Brahimi has traveled to Syria where the opposition is seeking to end President Bashar al-Assad's iron-fisted rule

"Brahimi's been out in the region. He got a chance to talk to Assad. He's talked to the opposition," State Department official Victoria Nuland said.

"He now will refine, presumably, some of the ideas that he had about how a transitional government based on the Geneva framework could go forward." The first step was to try to take the document drawn up in June and "actually begin to implement it, to actualize it," Nuland said.

"Then we have to, obviously, talk to the parties and see where we go."

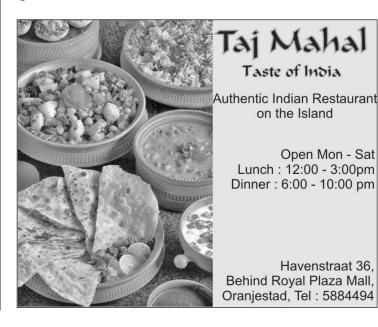
see where we go."

The Syrian National Coalition, which has been recognized by many countries, including the US, as the sole legitimate authority of the Syrian people, has already accepted the principles of the Geneva plan.

But questions remained about how to implement it, Nuland said.

"It calls for transitional governing structures; who would be in those structures? How would you actually come up with the group? Can you actually get the regime to be willing to move forward, to get out of the way, whatever it takes?" she asked.

The last round of consultations in December resulted in leaked reports of a joint Russia-US initiative on moving toward a transition government that the armed opposition could embrace.





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International News

Ex-Colombia president probed over militia links

BOGOTA (AFP) - Former Colombian president Alvaro Uribe is being investigated for alleged links to right-wing paramilitary groups during his tenure as a regional governor in the 1990s, officials say.

The allegations are not new, and courts dropped a previous probe. But prosecutors reopened a preliminary investigation last week after two jailed former militiamen provided new testimony against the conservative ex-head of state, the attorney general's office said Tuesday.

These two men said Uribe, as governor of northwest Antioquia department from 1995 to 1997, supported the creation of a paramilitary unit as part of a broader umbrella grouping

called the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, according to Ivan Cepeda, a leftist congressman who met with the two prisoners in jail last year.

Those right-wing forces are accused of killing tens of thousands of civilians as part of their battle against the FARC leftist rebel army.

The right-wing militia disbanded gradually from 2003 to 2006 under a peace deal with Uribe, who by then was president. He served from 2002 to 2010.

On Twitter, Uribe denied the new allegations by the jailed former militia fighters. They have been identified as Pablo Hernan Sierra and Juan Guillermo Monsalve.

Dozens hurt in New York ferry accident



NEW YORK (AFP) - About 50 people were injured when a rush-hour ferry packed with commuters smashed into a pier in New York City on Wednesday, firefighters said.

The accident took place at 8:45 am (1345 GMT) on Pier 11 in the East River in lower Manhattan, not far from Wall Street, the New York Fire Department said. The ferry was arriving from New Jersey.

"We are assessing 50 patients on the scene right now. We don't know what kind of injuries they have," an NYFD spokeswoman said.

Witnesses said the ferry was going too quickly when it approached the pier, perhaps resulting in the hard docking. A coast guard spokesman, Charles Rowe, said earlier that the cause of the accident was not yet known.

About 300 people were on board the vessel at the time of the accident.

Police and firefighters were on the scene and evacuating the injured on stretchers, television images showed. Other passengers were covered in blankets and awaiting assistance on the pier.

Television images showed a large gash in the hull of the vessel.

Dozens of ferries bring commuters from New Jersey or Brooklyn to Manhattan every day.

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Klaus Kinski daughter accuses him of years of sex abuse

BERLIN, (AFP) - The elder daughter of the late German film icon Klaus Kinski accused him Wednesday of sexually abusing her for several years from the time she was a small child.

Pola Kinski said the diminutive fair-haired actor who died in 1991 had molested her repeatedly from the age of five until she turned 19, in an interview with weekly magazine Stern ahead of the release of a tell-all book she has written.

The notoriously volatile but prolific star of "Fitzcarraldo" and "Aguirre, the Wrath of God" and a frequent collaborator of German director Werner Herzog "ignored all protests" by his young daughter, Pola Kinski charged.

"He just took what he wanted," she said, adding that she lived in constant fear as a youngster of his angry outbursts.

Pola, the now 60-year-old daughter of Kinski's first wife, the singer Gislinde Kuehbeck, also worked as an actress like her younger half sister Nastassja Kinski ("The Hotel New Hampshire", "Cat People").

She said she aimed to go public with her allegations to put a stop to the idolising of her famous father.

"I was sick of hearing, 'Your father! Great! Genius! I always

liked him'," she said. "Since his death, this adulation has only got worse."

Pola Kinski said she had the impression that her father, a

hero of European post-war cinema, was the same on the film set "as he was at home".

"He never respected other people," she said.



PARIS (AFP) - The Taliban are fighting a lost cause and must accept peace talks, the father of Malala Yousafzai said Wednesday, accepting a key French award for the Pakistani schoolgirl shot for campaigning for girls' education. In an impassioned speech after accepting the Simone de Beauvoir Prize for Womens' Freedom on behalf of the 15-year-old, Ziauddin Yousafzai said his daughter was supported by the world and by God. Yousafzai said the Taliban should now see the writing on the wall and "learn from this incident. Malala's father also evoked the plight of an Indian medical student who was brutally gang-raped in New Delhi and died in a Singapore hospital as well as "girls who are shot, who burn themselves because of child marriage and those who are raped." Her attempted murder has sparked calls for her to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Last month Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari announced a \$10 million donation for a global war chest to educate all girls by 2015 set up in Malala's name.



Health & Living

Boston declares public health emergency as Massachusetts faces harsh flu season

BOSTON - Mayor Thomas M. Menino declared a public health emergency Wednesday morning because of the expanding flu outbreak. Health care centers across the city will be offering free vaccines to anyone who hasn't yet been immunized. The city has 700 confirmed cases of flu so and four flu-related deaths. Last year Boston had only 70 confirmed cases.

Massachusetts has had 18 flu-related deaths so far this season, according to the state Department of Public Health. Public health officials emphasized that it's not to late to get a flu vaccine.



Two female patients over the age of 85 who died following a viral outbreak at The Redwoods senior facility.

Saudi teen married off to 86-year-old gets divorce

RIYADH (AFP) - A 15-yearold Saudi girl who was forced to marry an octogenarian has been granted a divorce after a local human rights group intervened, the watchdog said on Wednesday.

The Saudi Human Rights Commission (SHRC) raised the case "after learning of the marriage of a minor girl to an 86-year-old man in Jizan" in southeast Saudi Arabia, the group's head Bandar al-Ayban said in a statement.

Al-Hayat daily had reported that the teenager locked herself inside the bedroom on her wedding night before fleeing the man's home and returning to her parents.

She had been married off to the man in exchange for a dowry worth around \$17,300, the daily reported.

The SHRC had provided "legal assistance to the girl" so

she could get a divorce, Ayban said.

Another SHRC member, Hadi al-Yami, said the girl had "expressed her rejection of this marriage."

The divorce was announced after a regional tribal chief and local dignitaries intervened.

Saudi rights officials have been pushing for a law that would set a minimum marriage age of 16.

The SHRC is "trying in cooperation with ministries of justice and health to prevent such marriages," Yami told AFP.

Rights activist Suhaila al-Hammad says the authorities must "set the minimum marriage age at 18."

Saudi Arabia has no law against child marriage, and clerics and religious judges justify the practice based on Islamic and Saudi tradition.

A wave of norovirus hit the residential care facility on Dec. 24, and sickened a total of 63 staff and residents. It was a possible contributing factor to the death of two patients, who also suffered from other serious medical conditions. Symptoms of the highly contagious virus include dehydration, vomiting and diarrhea.

Massachusetts was one of 29 states reporting high levels of "influenza-like illness," according to the most recent weekly flu advisory issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The estimated rate of flu-related hospitalizations in the U.S. was 8.1 per 100,000 people, which is high for this time of year, according to Dr. Joe Bresee, chief of the epidemiology and prevention branch of the CDC's influenza division.

Typically, influenza is transmitted through the air by coughs or sneezes, creating aerosols containing the virus. Influenza can also be transmitted by direct contact with bird droppings or nasal secretions, or through contact with contaminated surfaces.

US top court limits stays of execution for mentally ill

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The Supreme Court unanimously decided Tuesday that mentally ill death row inmates should not receive unlimited suspensions of their post-conviction challenges.

The nation's highest court decided that such suspensions make sense on a case-by-case basis, but should be left to the discretion of individual judges, and not be automatic.

The court offered its ruling based on arguments from two death penalty cases. One concerned Sean Carter, who has been diagnosed as schizophrenic, and the other Ernest Gonzales, who suffers from psychosis.

Their lawyers had invoked their clients' mental health to get procedures against them frozen until they can become competent to participate in their own defense.

Writing for the court, conservative Justice Clarence Thomas wrote that lawyers were "quite capable" of defending their clients without their help.

The ruling overturned decisions by lower courts in Ohio and Arizona, respectively, granting unlimited stays of execution for the two men.

Carter was sentenced to death for the rape and murder

of his adoptive grandmother, while Gonzales was sent to death row for stabbing a couple in front of their seven-year-old child during a robbery.

In both cases, the states of Ohio and Arizona, supported by the federal government, appealed to Supreme Court to protest against the lack of a time limit on the suspensions, once given.

In its ruling, the court also reversed a 1967 decision in which it had frozen the death sentence of a mentally deficient man without giving a timeframe. The inmate ended up dying in prison.

In 2002, in its "Atkins v. Virginia" decision, the Supreme Court forbid the execution of people with intellectual disabilities, because their handicap could increase the risk of an arbitrary execution.

But it left it to individual states to determine what constitutes a mental handicap.

In 2012, Texas defied international protest to execute two inmates suffering from mental health troubles. A third prisoner, in Georgia, was saved at the last minute because of a change in the procedure for lethal injection.



Sci-Tech

Apple tailoring cheaper iPhone model: reports



SAN FRANCISCO (AFP) - Reports echoing online Tuesday fueled speculation that Apple is tailoring a low-price version of the iPhone for China and other emerging markets.

DigiTimes.com, which specializes in news about the supply side of the technology industry, cited unnamed sources as saying an iPhone model made with less expensive parts would be rolled out in the second half of this year.

The rumor was later endorsed by the Wall Street Jour-

nal, which based its report on people briefed on the matter

The low-priced iPhone will have a big screen along the lines of those popular with consumers today, according to DigiTimes.

Such a move would be a dramatic shift from Apple's unabashed style of crafting premium products that sell in the high-end of the market instead of getting caught up in price wars with rivals.

Apple sees huge potential in China, and coming out with a more affordable iPhone may be a necessary move to ward off competition from bargain-priced smartphones powered by Google-backed Android software.

Expanding the ranks of iPhone users would also increase the potential for the California-based company to sell people mini-applications, music and other digital content popular on smartphones.

Free WiFi access for entire NY City neighborhood

NEW YORK,(AFP) - A Manhattan neighborhood has become the first in New York to have totally free outdoor wireless Internet access, courtesy of Internet giant Google.

"All you need is a laptop or smartphone or other wireless-enabled device and a web browser to get online," Google's chief information officer Ben Fried said at a press conference announcing the free Internet access, which covers about 20 city blocks in the Chelsea neighborhood of Manhattan.

The neighborhood is where Google has a large corporate presence, making it a logical place for the massive free Internet hotspot for New Yorkers toting WiFi-ready devices.

"New York is the second largest Google office in the world," said Fried, flanked by city Mayor Michael Bloomberg and US Senator Chuck Schumer. adding that he hopes New York will dislodge California's Silicon Valley one day to become "tech center of the world."

More than 100,000 of Google's immediate neighbors will enjoy the free WiFi, in addition to thousands of daily visitors to the neighborhood.

Bloomberg noted that there are already about 20 city parks that enjoy free Internet access, and said the service would be extended to 32 others by September

US firm DISH makes rival bid for Clearwire

NEW YORK (AFP) - US satellite broadcast carrier DISH Network announced Tuesday that it had made a bid for Clearwire Corp, topping Sprint Nextel's offer for the wireless broadband firm's shares by 11 percent.

The unsolicited bid, for at least 25 percent and up to all of the shares of Clearwire, cast a question over Sprint's earlier agreement to buy all 50 percent of Clearwire that it did not already own.

Clearwire announced on December 17 that it had accepted Sprint's offer, which is also crucial to another giant deal: Japanese firm Softbank's plan to acquire 70 percent of Sprint.

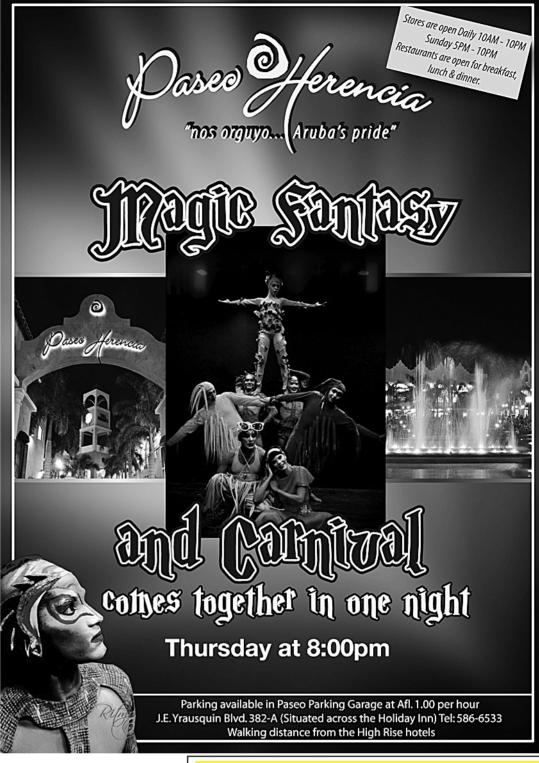
Bellevue, Washingtonbased Clearwire is sought after for its substantial spectrum holdings and its 4G mobile broadband network, which it is building to handle heavy video transmissions at high speed.

It said in a statement that the DISH offer was "only a preliminary indication of interest" based on acquiring at least 25 percent of Clearwire and also offered to buy spectrum assets for \$2.2 billion, and enter into commercial agreements with Clearwire.

Clearwire said that in weighing the DISH bid, it was still bound by its December 17 deal with Sprint.

Sprint meanwhile criticized the DISH bid as a series of separate deals and conditions which together as one "makes the proposal not viable."

"Sprint believes its agreement to acquire Clearwire, which offers Clearwire shareholders certain and attractive value, is superior to the highly conditional DISH proposal," it said in a statement.



Rogue asteroid



PARIS (AFP) - An asteroid believed to pose a remote risk of colliding with Earth this century is 20 percent bigger than previously thought, the European Space Agency (ESA) said on Wednesday. In a press release, ESA said its Herschel deep-space telescope had scanned a space rock called 99942 Apophis last weekend as it headed towards its closest flyby with our planet in years. Previous estimates bracketed the asteroid's average diameter at 270 metres (877 feet) give or take 60m (195 feet), representing a mass that would equal the energy release of a 506-megatonne bomb, according to NASA figures. Named after the god of evil and darkness in Egyptian mythology, Apophis sparked a scare when it was first detected in 2004. There remains a tiny impact risk of about one in 250,000 on April 13, 2036, when it will pass even closer to Earth, according to NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL).

PICKLES









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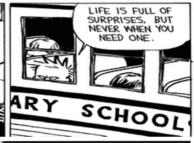




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<u>Finance</u>

Oil prices weaken after US energy report

NEW YORK (AFP) - Crude oil prices retreated Wednesday after a US oil inventory report pointed to large increases in refined petroleum products.

Oil prices for US benchmark West Texas Intermediate settled five cents lower at \$93.10 a barrel.

In London, the Brent contract for February finished at \$111.76 a barrel, losing 18 cents from Tuesday.

The decline came after a weekly report by the US Energy Information Administration reported a surprisingly large increases in stocks of gasoline and distillate fuel, a category that includes home heating oil.

Gasoline stockpiles in the week ending January 4 surged by 7.4 million barrels, far higher than forecasts for a rise of 2.1 million barrels. Reserves of distillates soared 6.8 million barrels, well beyond the expected 1.4-million-barrel increase.

And US crude oil stocks



grew by 1.3 million barrels, below the 2.2 million-barrel forecast according to a survey by Dow Jones Newswires.

Crude futures also fell Wednesday on lingering concerns over the US economy despite solid earnings from aluminum giant Alcoa, analysts said.

Global markets have shifted their attention from the US fiscal debate to corporate earnings to gauge the health of the world's biggest economy and largest oil consuming nation going into 2013.

"The recent fiscal cliff-inspired rally is fast becoming the 'Ghost of Christmas Past' as traders shift their focus to US corporate earnings," said Jason Hughes, head of premium client management at IG Markets in Singapore.

"Solid gains notched up in the first week of the year across global markets are so far just being nibbled at by fears of disappointing fourthquarter profits across US blue chip stocks."

Top BNP Paribas official questioned over Fortis

BRUSSELS (AFP) - Lars Machenil, the finance director of French banking giant BNP Paribas, is being investigated as part of a probe into the collapse of the Belgian-Dutch Fortis group, press reports said Wednesday.

Machenil took up his BNP Paribas post in March last year, having filled the same role at Fortis in 2008, Belgian dailies L'Echo and De Tjid said.

Machenil is the sixth Fortis official to be caught up in the probe into the collapse of the bank and insurance group in 2008 but the reports gave no details of what charges, if any, he could face.

Other officials have been charged with insider trading, fraud and using false signatures.

The Netherlands put up 16.8 billion euros (\$22 billion at current exchange rates) to take over the Dutch parts of the business while BNP Paribas acquired the Belgian banking arm.

L'Echo said a seventh person was also under investigation.

Judicial authorities in Brussels declined to comment on the reports.



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Banking sector became 'too arrogant' : *UBS*

LONDON (AFP) - The banking sector "needs to change" after it became "too arrogant" in the run-up to the infamous Libor rate-rigging scandal, the head of the investment bank division of Swiss lender UBS told British lawmakers.

"We all got probably too arrogant, too self-convinced that things were correct the way they were. I think the industry needs to change," Andrea Orcel told the Parliamentary Commission on Banking Standards, which was set up to examine the Libor crisis. "There are certainly elements of our cultures which are negative and that we need to root out. We are in the process of rooting out," he told the Commission, which is a scrutiny panel composed of lawmakers from parliament's upper and lower houses.

The Commission, established by British finance minister George Osborne, is looking into banking standards and culture in the wake of the Libor rate-rigging scandal that has rocked Barclays and UBS.

US, British and Swiss authorities last month hit Switzerland's largest bank with \$1.5 billion in fines -- the second-

largest banking penalty ever -for massive misconduct in the setting of the Libor rate.

The Libor rate is used as a benchmark for global financial contracts worth about \$300 trillion, and revelations that it had been rigged have harmed the reputation of the City of London financial centre, though the misconduct is believed to have occurred elsewhere as well.

The crisis erupted last June after British bank Barclays was fined £290 million (\$470 million, 363 million euros) by British and US regulators for attempted manipulation of Libor and Euribor interbank rates between 2005 and 2009.

Libor is calculated daily, using estimates from banks of their own rates. However, the system has been found to be open to abuse, with some traders lying about borrowing costs to boost trading positions or make their bank seem more secure.

The London Interbank Offered Rate (Libor) is a flagship instrument used all over the world, affecting what banks, businesses and individuals pay to borrow money. Euribor is the eurozone equivalent.

US oil output to soar to 26-year high in 2014

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US oil production will jump 23 percent over the next two years to a quarter-century high by 2014, reducing demand for foreign supplies from the world's largest oil importer, according to a new official forecast.

The government's Energy Information Agency said that booming production from shale and other "tight oil" formations will push the country's daily production to 7.92 million barrels a day from 6.43 million barrels a day in 2012.

Production last year already gained 780,000 barrels a day from 2011 thanks to surging

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

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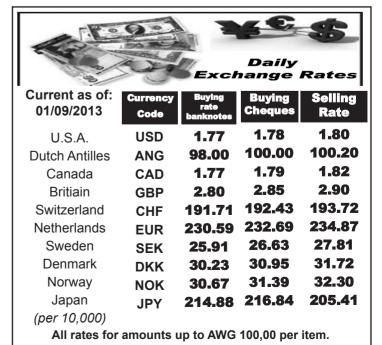
production from fracking operations tapping shale resources in the North Dakota region, the EIA said in the report released Tuesday.

The continuing rise will by 2014 push US production to its highest level since 1988, closing in on the world's leading producer Saudi Arabia, which puts out more than 10 million barrels a day, most of it exported.

The rise in production will be paralleled however by a fall in global oil prices, the EIA said: the price for the benchmark Brent crude, which averaged \$112 a barrel last year, will drop to \$105 on average this year and \$99 in 2014.

The falling price is driven due to higher supplies on the market of both oil and gas, thanks to growing exploitation of previously inaccessible oil shale and other tight oil and gas formations.

The rise in the past few years of fracking -- which involves using high pressure to collapse complex rock formations, along with horizontal drilling, to release the hydrocarbons -- has been at the root of the production surge.



Minister visits with Dutch baseball star "The Fox" Martinus



-- Aruba Minister of Sports, Visser, recently had the pleasure of visiting with Eithel Calvin Martinus, one of Aruba's most distinguished sportsmen in the field of baseball in Holland. Martinus is affectionetely known as "Wim" and is also popularly called "The Fox" in Holland as a pitcher and coach with an admirable career.

The Fox. who was on the island on vacation, sat down with Visser and exchanged ideas and discussed several topics of interest relative to baseball. Visser, who admires Martinus was pleased to be able to talk about the development of baseball on Aruba and to listen to his many bits of ad-

Wim Martinus has had a very successful career from a very young age; from the time he began playing ball as a child in San Nicolaas. He moved to Holland and there played 20 seasons, scoring 302 homeruns, and maintainting a batting average of 325. Martinus was part of the Dutch series some 12 times and in 1999 he retired and began serving as an assistant coach. But in 2000, he succumbed to the temptation to get back into the game. In 2005 he retired again to become the head coach for Sparta/Feyenoord.

After only one year as head coach, Martinus made another World Baseball Classic and Baseball World Cup, and in 2010 European Championship.

Aruba is proud of Wim "The Fox" Martinus, one of our own sons who was born and raised here in San Nicolaas. Today, he is a tremendous sportsman who still loves his place of birth.

important decision in his career, and that was to accept to become the coach for the National Dutch Team. As coach of the National Dutch Team, "The Fox" led his team to winning significant games: 2006 International Cup, 2007 International European Championship; 2007 Baseball World Cup, 2008 Olympics, 2009

Cas Animal Cont'd





For those not familiar with Cas Animal Foundation, it is a local organization which rescues sick, injured, abandoned and abused dogs and cats off Aruba's streets. The foundation is in the process of building a proper no-kill shelter to house over 200 dogs, plus cats, but the first priority of Cas Animal is to place rescued animals in loving homes.

Animal lovers who have taken in a rescued animal can tell you they may be a bit shy at first, but quickly respond to kindness and proper care, such as regular feeding and daily attention. They make wonderful protectors of the home and steadfast companions.

Bringing a young puppy

into the home brings with it great responsibility, particularly if they are of the more energetic breeds meant for hunting or herding. These are dogs meant to live very active, working lives. Owners that complain of a destructive dog, often leave the devoted companion alone for several hours of the day, resulting in

boredom and loneliness as they miss their beloved master.

An excellent remedy for this is to bring another dog or cat into the home to provide companionship and entertainment for both. Don't let having a lone dog or cat prevent you from adopting another, your pet will likely be much the better for it, as will your belong-

If two dogs are too much work, there is always a kitten that can use a good home. Kittens will be a bit wary of a canine for the first few days, but this will change, so have some patience. They will soon be a comfort and playmate for each other. Domestic dogs and cats are very social animals, and do

not really do well left alone an entire day, pets need pets of their own.

Cas Animal founder Kirsten Arndt now cares for nearly 70 dogs in her home, which she has converted into a temporary shelter. Most are older, calmer dogs, which have gotten past the chewing stage. At present, she also has two lovely puppies in need of good homes. Her costs for feeding, treating and neutering all the dogs she rescues and maintains are astronomical. If anyone wishes to help, they can support her with donations in the form of payment to the Cas Animal Foundation account at the Contreras Veterinary Clinics or to Animal Care Clinic in Paradera, phone number 582-8382. Donations can be made directly to the foundation's account: Cas Animal Foundation, CMB Bank account # 25762110. If you are not an island resident and wish to adopt a dog, or see one in distress, call Kiki at 742-8732 and she will help you through the process of acquiring the papers and a carrier needed to take one home. This is done regularly and many happy owners find great pleasure in being reminded every day of Aruba by the loving new members of their households.







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Armstrong to address doping scandal on Oprah



LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Disgraced cyclist Lance Armstrong will discuss the doping scandal that dramatically brought down his stellar career during an interview with Oprah Winfrey next week.

The famed talk show host said a 90-minute special episode would address "years of accusations of cheating, and charges of lying about the use ofperformance-enhancing drugs" throughout Armstrong's "storied cycling career."

The interview will be Armstrong's first since being stripped of his seven Tour de France titles last year and will air on the Oprah Winfrey Network. It will also be streamed live on her website, a publicity statement said.

Last week The New York Times reported that Armstrong, 41, was considering publicly admitting that he used banned performance-enhancing drugs, in an apparent bid to return to competitive sport in marathons and triathlons.

In the interview, to be shown in a primetime slot next Thursday, January 17, Winfrey will speak with Armstrong at his home in Austin, Texas.

Before the ban, Armstrong was competing in triathlons, and his Twitter feed is full of posts about his continued biking, swimming and runs.

His tweets also make clear he is following the media storm surrounding his fall from grace -- and that he has not always been pleased with how the case has been portrayed.

"It took a 'photographer' to 'write' the most balanced piece we've seen yet," Armstrong wrote on January 2, linking to an essay by cycling photographer Graham Watson.

Watson wrote, in part, "Outright angels do not win a Tour de France."

"Lance did what he had to do to win, and he clearly did it very well. If he cheated, he cheated the other cheats of that era, even if by doing so he also cheated an adoring public."

Armstrong has vehemently denied doping and it is not known if he will admit to doping on Winfrey's show.

The show used words like "no-holds-barred interview" but also "alleged doping scan-dal," "accusations of cheating" "accusations of cheating" and "charges of lying" in its publicity statement.

The announcement came on the same day that "60 Minutes" said US Anti-Doping Agency chief executive Travis Tygart told them in an interview to be aired Wednesday that Armstrong attempted to donate around \$250,000 to the agency.

Late last year, cancer survivor Armstrong resigned as chairman of the Livestrong foundation he created.



Spend a fun evening with friends at Barney's



A place where you feel like you are with friends

A few months ago, Palm Beach welcomed a cozy new place that offers good food, great prices and a uniquely warm,

welcoming ambiance that makes patrons feel as if they are visiting with friends rather than just eating out. Even the name, "Barney's", which was inspired by Barney Rubble of the Flintstones, is an expression of the good humor of its

owners and your

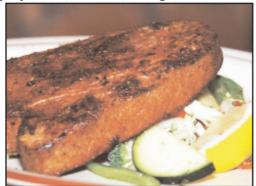
hosts, Ron and Elina.

Ron and Elina have a very congenial division of labor; he enjoys being bartender and playing around with his "cocktail of the day" while she sees to it that everyone is well satisfied with their meal. Chef Jan is in the kitchen doing his magic; patrons praise their spicy Firecracker Shrimp appetizer and mushrooms stuffed with escargot, priced at \$9.50 and \$8.50, or the Smoked Trout Fillet for a real gourmet

They are particularly popular for their "Build Your Own Barney Burger" using specially imported organic beef from Holland, guaranteed to have been raised without steroids or antibiotics, only \$9.50 with fries and coleslaw. Patrons are handed a special hamburger checklist, which features a full menu of toppings, sauces and cheeses to customize your order to create the ideal burger. One can also opt for a second or third hamburger patty for a very nominal cost.

High end items on the menu, such as the Seafood Pasta, are only \$20.50. They also have a kid's menu with favorites such as a Kid's Burger, chicken fingers and Mac & Cheese; most items are only

\$4. One regular described the place as particularly "kid-friendly," with Elina, a mother herself, having devised a num-



Tuna Steak a la Chef

ber of methods to keep young ones entertained. The menu has a range to please patrons who are in the mood for something simple while other can be indulgent gourmands.

Tuesday through Saturday evenings they have specialty nights at bargain rates. Tuesday is Schnitzel Night, with a choice of chicken or pork schnitzel prepared any of five ways, a platter with salad and side dish is \$17.50. Wednesday is "All you can eat grouper, prepared any of five ways, with veggies and side dish, \$19.50. Thursday they do it again with unlimited ribs done three ways for \$17.50 with salad, slaw and fries, Saturday means endless rib eye steak with salad and fries for \$19.50. Friday evening ends the work week with Karaoke Night, a convivial and fun evening when islanders kick back and let loose their inner rock star.

Barney's is located just next to the huge supermarket on the Palm Beach/Noord road, not far from the gas station. They are open from 5:00 to 11:00 PM and closed on Mondays. Check out their full menu at http://www.barneysaruba.com or call 586-5420 for reservations and directions.

Budget Car Rental celebrating 50 years budget-minded service!



Explore Aruba in a Jeep wrangler hard top

The car rental name synonymous with savings will next month celebrate their golden anniversary of operating on Aruba! One of the first of its kind to establish a car rental agency with highly competitive prices, it still maintains that standard of offering the best service, a diverse fleet of vehicles to meet each renters needs, at the best price possible.

Budget has a fleet of 250 autos on Aruba, ranging from subcompact to authentic Jeep Wrangler® hardtop 4X4 or



Clean, dependable Toyota Yaris

Budget.

Frederick, Lisette and Larry welcome you

the stylish Toyota Rav 4, for exploring Aruba's outback air-conditioned comfort. Their standard Toyota Yaris, the most popular model, is known for quality and dependability. Each year, they refresh 25% of their fleet and retire the older cars. Compared to the U.S., car rentals are quite

any hotel, and return you to your door when turning in your car.

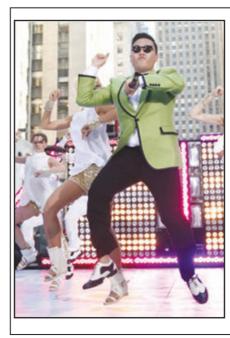
affordable on Aruba, with the third party liability insurance included in the rental rates, as

Budget's head office is in Camacuri, not far from the airport, but they maintain an outlet right at the airport and another conveniently located in the Arawak Gardens in Palm Beach, an easy stroll from all the Palm Beach resorts. Budget will provide free transportation to their

required by law.

A Toyota Yaris rents for \$174 for the week; there is an additional airport concession fee to have a car available immediately on arrival, but this is balanced out by the cost of roundtrip fares to most resorts, and on weekly rentals is a decided savings.

Budget has become the world's third largest car rental franchise because of their commitment to quality service and product at the best price possible, and the staff of Budget Car Rental Aruba is equally dedicated to seeing their customers smile



LOS ANGELES (AFP) - South Korean rapper Psy is going nuts. Not content with starring in the mostwatched video in YouTube history, the man behind viral hit "Gangnam Style" is to appear in a Super Bowl commercial for... pistachios. "The Wonderful Pistachios brand is fun, just like me," Psy said Wednesday by way of a press release from Paramount Farms, which owns the upmarket California snack label. "Also, I love pistachios and I look good in green." It will be Wonderful Pistachios' first spot ever during the Super Bowl, the annual American football classic, set for February 3 this year, that is also the most coveted showcase for commercials on US television. Psy made Internet history shortly before Christmas when "Gangnam Style" -- featuring his signature horse-riding dance -- clocked more than one billion views on YouTube. CBS television has been selling Super Bowl advertising at record prices this year, with 30 seconds going for more than \$4 million dollars, USA Today reported Wednesday, quoting network executives.

SPORT

Football: Ronaldo hat-trick fires Madrid into quarter-finals

MADRID (AFP) - Cristiano Ronaldo responded to missing out on the Ballon d'Or by hitting a stunning hat-trick as Real Madrid beat Celta Vigo 4-0 to reach the Spanish Cup

quarter-finals on Wednesday.

Trailing 2-1 from the first leg of their last-16 tie, Portuguese star Ronaldo hit two early openers before settling the tie with three minutes remaining to calm his team's nerves after Sergio Ramos had been sent off with 17 minutes

Sami Khedira added the fourth in the final minute and Jose Mourinho's men will now meet Valencia in the next round before a potential semi-final tie with eternal rivals Barcelona who knocked Madrid out last season at the quarter-final stage.

Mourinho recalled goal-keeper Iker Casillas for the clash after he had controversially dropped the club captain to the bench for the last two La Liga games.

Ronaldo, beaten to the Ballon d'Or by Lionel Messi on Monday, hit a sensational opener after only two minutes.

Receiving the ball from a short throw-in the Portuguese hit an unstoppable shot from wide on the left that fizzed and then bent before beating Sergio in the Celta goal at his far post to give Madrid the lead on the night and level the tie.

It was the same man who hit a shot over the bar from long range 10 minutes later, before he doubled his side's lead with one delicate touch on 23 minutes to finish off a Luka Modric through ball.

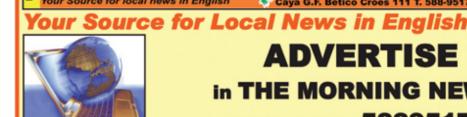
Mesut Ozil went close from a tight angle before Sergio Ramos hit a free-kick just over the bar as the Galician side struggled to contain the Spanish champions.

Celta had to wait until the 53rd minute for their first advance on the home goal when Park Chu-Young came close to connecting to a Quique de Lucas cross.

Celta coach Paco Herrera then replaced Park with his top-scorer Iago Aspas sensing his side were still in the tie.

The substitute immediately gave the away team more urgency and Casillas saved an Aspas shot on 63 minutes, before De Lucas gave him more of a test four minutes later.

The pressure increased for Madrid when Ramos was dismissed for his second yellow card and Casillas had to make important saves from Michael Krohn-Dehli and Augusto Fernandez before Ronaldo got his third with a crisp shot from the left to settle nerves on 87 minutes before Khedira made it



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Yachting: Horn joy of six for Golding as Stamm limps out



(AFP) - Britain's Mike Golding on Wednesday set a record by completing a sixth navigation of Cape Horn as he left the Pacific and headed out into the Atlantic.

While Golding celebrated his milestone Swiss skipper Bernard Stamm was calling time on his race after being forced to take on fuel resulting in instant disqualification with the rules forbidding any outside assistance.

Stamm's boat Cheminees Poujoulet, placed eighth, has been without power since hitting an unidentified object last Sunday.

His defection leaves 12 boats from the original 20 that set off from the French port of Les Sables d'Olonne two months ago.

Stamm was disqualified last week after receiving uncalled for assistance after his generator packed up but was later allowed to race on following a successful appeal to the race

Golding meanwhile, currently standing sixth in the Vendee Globe, has now completed three west to east and east to west crossings of the Cape either solo or on a team. "The first time we had the

most wind - 55-60 knots - but it was from the east.

"I think I was the only person to get a Challenge yacht making over 21 knots. The second time was on my own and it was relatively benign. I was on a long starboard reaching tack.

"But the third time was fully crewed and as we got down towards Diego Ramirez island there was an incredible feeding frenzy with birds attacking fish, fish being chased by seals and dolphins and killer whales circling.

"It was the full food chain in action in front of us. Of course the crew all thought it was always like this! I had never seen it before, or since!

"On my first Vendee Globe it was relatively quiet and I got up close again. What is amazing is that you go around the corner into Le Maire Strait and it is all quiet and flat water and you suddenly smell land, the heather and the lavender and it is quite the sweetest smell after you have not been close to land for so long.

The west to east crossing is the tougher challenge owing to the need to battle the prevailing winds.

Golding made his first east-west crossing of the Cape in the 1992-1993 British Steel Challenge a year prior to his first solo passage. He was at it again in the 1996-1997 BT Global Challenge). He managed the west to east crossing in his first two Vendee Globes (2000-2001 and 2004-2005) and made it a round half dozen with the current edition.

Frenchman Francois Gabart leads the Vendee Globe race ahead of compatriots Armel Le Cléac'h and Jean-Pierre Dick with Briton Alex Thomson fourth and another Frenchman, Jean Le Cam, fifth.





WISLA: Anders Bardal (R) of Norway celebrates winning the 14th FIS World cup competition next to compatriot Rune Velta (3rd), on January 9, 2013 in Wisla. Bardal finished with 264.4 points after leaps of 130m and 128m to finish ahead of Richard Freitag of Germany and Rune Velta of Norway. Austria's Gregor Schlierenzauer, the winner of the Four Hills at the weekend and overall World Cup leader, skipped the event because of flu.





NBA: George takes care of LeBron and the Heat

INDIANAPOLIS (AFP) - Paul George finished with 29 points and 11 rebounds, as the Indiana Pacers defeated the Miami Heat 87-77 Tuesday in a rematch of last season's Eastern Conference playoff semi-finals.

It marked the first game between the two teams since Miami beat Indiana in six games in last season's series.

David West had 14 points and 11 rebounds for the Pacers, who have won two in a row. Lance Stephenson finished with 13 points.

Dwyane Wade scored 30 points for the Heat, who started a six-game road trip



Nate Robinson #2 of the Chicago Bulls shoots over Shane Battier #31 of the Miami Heat

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on Tuesday. LeBron James finished with 22 points and 10 rebounds for the Heat who have won three of their last five games.

Miami have played just 14 games on the road this season, one of the lowest totals in the league. They are 7-7 away from South Beach.

It was in the second round of last season's playoffs that the Pacers took the Heat to six games before Miami eventually prevailed, then went on to win the NBA Championship.

Not only did George lead his team in scoring, but he had the assignment of covering James.

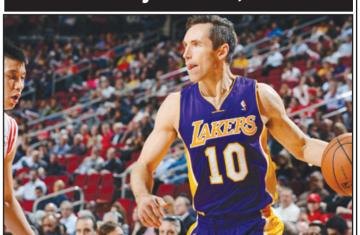
On Saturday, the Pacers trounced the Milwaukee Bucks 95-80.

In the regular season, the Heat have beaten the Pacers in nine of their last 12.

NFL:Redskins Griffin undergoes knee surgerv

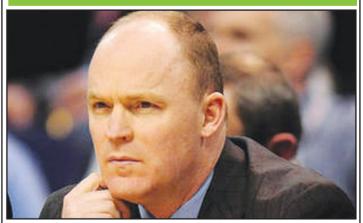
WASHINGTON (AFP) - Washington Redskins quarterback Robert Griffin underwent surgery on Wednesday to repair ligament tears in his right knee. Doctors operated on both his lateral collateral and anterior cruciate ligaments and Griffin is expected to undergo an extensive rehab programme in an attempt to be ready to play next season. Team doctors said the operation on the 2012 number two overall draft pick was a success. The 22-year-old Griffin sprained his lateral collateral ligament in a win over the Baltimore Ravens last month and missed one game because of the injury. He returned to help lead the Redskins to their first NFC East title since 1999. The former Heisman Trophy winner then re-injured his knee during last Sunday's loss to the Seattle Seahawks in the NFC wild card game.

NBA: Nash joins 10,000 club



HOUSTON (AFP) - Canada's Steve Nash became just the fifth player in NBA history to reach 10,000 career assists, hitting the milestone in the Los Angeles Lakers' 125-112 loss to Houston Tuesday. Nash notched his 10,000th assist in the first half, making him the fourth fastest to reach the mark in league history (1,162 games). He finished with 16 points and 10 assists. The historic marker came late in the half as the 17-year veteran found Antawn Jamison to give Los Angeles a 62-57 lead. The Lakers were without two of their top scorers, Dwight Howard and Pau Gasol, who were out with injuries. Nash joins John Stockton (15,806), the New York Knicks' Jason Kidd (11,969), Mark Jackson (10,334) and Magic Johnson (10,141) in the exclusive club.

NBA: Skiles steps down as Bucks' coach



MILWAUKEE (AFP) - Head coach Scott Skiles has stepped down as coach of the Milwaukee Bucks, the National Basketball Association team announced on Tuesday. Assistant coach Jim Boylan will take over for the remainder of the season for the Bucks who are now 16-16 heading into Tuesday's game against Phoenix. Skiles - who was named the Bucks' head coach before the start of the 2008-09 season - was in the final year of his contract and had an overall record of 162-182.



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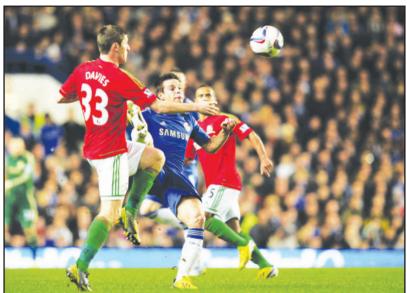
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Football: Swansea stun Chelsea in fresh League Cup shock



Swansea City's Welsh defender Ben Davies (L) vies with Chelsea's Spanish defender Cesar Azpilicueta (R)

LONDON (AFP) Swansea produced the
second surprise English
League Cup semi-final
first leg result in as
many days after defeating Chelsea 2-0 at the
European champions'
Stamford Bridge
ground on Wednesday.

If not as great an upset as fourth-tier Bradford City's 3-1 win over Premier League Aston Villa on Tuesday, Swansea's victory over their top flight rivals

was still a surprise.

Both Swansea goals came as a result of two errors by Chelsea defender Branislav Ivanovic.

In-form striker Spanish striker Michu, signed for just £2 million (\$1.23 million, 1.59 million euros) from La Liga side Rayo Vallecano, scored his 16th goal of the season in the 39th minute with a curling shot from the edge of the box after Ivanovic miscontrolled the ball.

Chelsea boss Rafael Benitez brought Frank Lampard and Demba Ba off the bench in search of an equaliser but none came.

And in stoppage time, shortly after Ba had had a penalty appeal turned down on his home debut, Swansea's Danny Graham scored for the fourth match in a row after another Ivanovic mistake.

Now Welsh side Swansea, managed by Denmark great Michael Laudrup, will look to seal the tie in the second leg at the Liberty Stadium on January 23 with the prospect of an improbable final against Bradford in their sights.

